Get to know Scoop! - page 8

The Eastern Echo

Tuesday, November 19, 2024 | Volume 141, Issue 14 Serving EMU and Ypsilanti since 1881

LGBT Resource Center to host vigil for Transgender Day of Remembrance

On Nov. 13, 2023, in honor of Transgender Awareness Week Emma Wuetrich, coordinator of the EMU LGBT resource center, painted the free speech wall on campus alongside Megan Shackelford and Karley Walsh. Kaia Tolu/*The Eastern Echo*

Colae Eason
News Reporter

The LGBT Resource Center has planned a Transgender Day of Remembrance vigil on Nov. 20, the day of the nationally recognized holiday. The vigil will take place at the campus Lake House at 4:30 p.m.

"The event organically emerged as a response to trans folks being deadnamed and misgendered, even after death," said LGBT Resource Center Program Coordinator Emma Wuetrich in an email.

Transgender Day of Remembrance is nationally recognized as "a day to commemorate the transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming persons who are targeted and killed for living authentically and courageously," according to U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in a statement about the holiday.

According to a report by the Human Rights Campaign, 33 transgender and gender non-conforming individuals were victims of fatal violence in the United States from Nov. 21, 2022, to Nov. 20, 2023.

"Hosting the vigil is important because anti-trans violence is devastating and underreported," Wuetrich said.

The HRC reported 335 total victims of fatal violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people since 2011 when they began to keep track of the numbers.

85% of total victims are people of color, according to the HRC.

"Transgender persons experience disproportionately high levels of homicide and assault. Their families and loved ones too often see no justice," Blinken said.

Black transgender women are disproportionately affected by fatal violence, accounting for 75% of all victims of fatal violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people.

"The vigil always ends with moments of silence after reading the names of those lost, so their real, affirming names are said out loud across the country," Wuetrich said.

The vigil is a part of EMU's Trans* Compassion Week, from Nov. 18-22.

"We intentionally host our Trans* Compassion Week during that time to include programming of reverence and joy in gender diversity," Wuetrich said.

Trans* Compassion week at EMU includes events like Day of Action Tabling, Crafting with Compassion, and the Pop-Off Clothing Swap, along with the Day of Remembrance Vigil.

More information about Trans* Compassion Week and the Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil can be found on the program's website.

"It is everyone's responsibility to ensure trans persons can live full lives of dignity, without fear of violence or harm," Blinken said in the statement. "Until then, we will continue to speak loudly and clearly to end transphobic violence and homicide."

Local, state laws on when campaign signs must come down

Isabella DiPonio
Staff Writer

With Election Day over, the time has come for community members to remove campaign signs from their lawns and streets. Several rules exist governing campaign sign removal, and several are from different departments and levels of government.

Legal timeline

Michigan law requires that campaign signs be removed within 10 days after the election. This law also applies to signs posted on private property, including residential lawns, in addition to signs placed along public roads.

Key legal information is found on the Michigan Department of Transportation website under political signs, which explains that public safety is a main reason for the rules.

"Improperly placed signs can create safety hazards and interfere with a driver's vision along roads," state officials wrote on the webpage. "To maintain traffic safety while affording office-seekers the opportunity to inform the public, rules that govern the placement of signs on state highways must be followed."

Michigan law also prohibits unauthorized signs of any type in the roadside right-of-way or on a traffic sign or traffic signal.

The specific rules outline where signs can be placed along roadways and other areas. Failure to adhere to the rules might lead to removal of the signs by a government representative and -- depending on local ordinances of a given county or city, fees or other penalties.

For state-maintained roads and highways, these rules apply, and are listed on the Michigan transportation department website:

45
Karen Lovejoy Roe FOR TRUSTEE
HILL HARPER U.S. SENATE 2024
DERRICK JACKSON DEMOCRAT FOR SHERIFF
ALYSHIA DYER DEMOCRAT FOR SHERIFF
RE-ELECT STAN ELDRIDGE
ELECT MICHAEL M. WHITE TRUSTEE
Leah MILLS CHAPMAN DEMOCRAT FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Political campaign signs are scattered along the roadway in Ypsilanti Township at the intersection of Whittaker Road and S. Huron River Drive in July 2024. Max Taylor/*The Eastern Echo*

Signs must be more than 30 feet from the edge of the roadway (white line) for highways that do not have barrier-type curbs. For highways with barrier curbs, the signs must be more than three feet from the back of the curb.

Signs are not permitted within areas used for clear vision at intersections or commercial driveways so they will not interfere with the sight distance of a driver.

No signs may be placed within the limited access rights of way (freeways, including ramps).

Illegally placed signs will be removed. Signs removed by MDOT crews will be kept for seven days at a local MDOT office or maintenance garage, then discarded.

Washtenaw County officials, as stated on its website, will not hold the signs for any period, explaining: the road commission "has the right to remove unauthorized signs from the road right-of-way and dispose of them without notice."

The Washtenaw County Road Commission follows the same policies as the Michigan Department of Transportation in regard to campaign sign removal. Tiffany Oliphant, the Washtenaw County Road Commission Communications Manager, said the county does not issue fees or fines to those who fail to comply with the policy.

"We would hope that the owners of those signs and the political teams that put those signs up, would remove them," Oliphant said. "We do not have the manpower to go around and remove political signs."

On the county's website, department officials said the road commission "prioritizes removing signs that are a safety hazard or are in the way of pending maintenance."

"We do not have the manpower to go around and remove political signs," a spokesperson from the Washtenaw County Road Commission said following the Nov. 5 election.

Practices to consider

While there might not be legal repercussions if signs remain past the 10-day window, state and county officials said it is important to follow the removal policies.

If a sign is placed on private property, it is the property owner's responsibility to take it down, according to the state rules. Signs placed on public property -- including roadsides, city-owned areas, and medians -- must be removed 10 days after the election.

In Michigan, while residents and candidates must comply with the legal requirements for sign removal, they are also urged to demonstrate respect for public space and the community during election season.

The Eastern Echo serves the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti-area communities as an independent student-operated newspaper. Founded in 1881 as The Normal News, The Echo distributes weekly printed editions on campus and throughout the surrounding community during the fall and winter academic semesters; and publishes year-round on the web. Contents are subject to copyright and may not be reproduced without prior written consent of the newspaper.

COPYRIGHT @ 2024 (The Eastern Echo)
All rights reserved.

www.EasternEcho.com

THE ECHO MISSION

The Eastern Echo informs the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti community by highlighting newsworthy content in a fair, accurate and timely manner.

HOW TO REACH US

The Eastern Echo
Fall 2024 Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief:
Ameera Salman
editor@easternecho.com

Managing Editor:
Emma Owens
managing@easternecho.com

Sports Editor:
Elena Davis
sports@easternecho.com

Podcast Editor:
Alex Kreps
podcast@easternecho.com

Arts Editor,
Cellar Roots Editor-in-Chief:
Madison Cantrell
cellarroots@easternecho.com

Design Chief:
Rylee Curley
design@easternecho.com

Photo Editor:
Max Taylor
photo@easternecho.com

Digital Editor:
Julez DeShetler
digital@easternecho.com

Copy Editors:
Noah Cimaroli
Allie Beecher
copyeditor@easternecho.com

Business Manager:
Aidan Bonney
advertising@easternecho.com

Student Media Advisor:
Christine Uthoff
advisor@easternecho.com

PICK UP A COPY

Print editions published Tuesdays from late August to early May are available in racks or on tables in all academic buildings on the EMU campus, and at dozens of businesses in the community.

Among those businesses are:

- Sweetwaters on Cross St
- The Golden Egg
- Domino's
- and more!

Want to have copies of The Eastern Echo delivered to your Ypsilanti business? Email advertising@easternecho.com!

CORRECTIONS

The Eastern Echo corrects mistakes. If we got it wrong, we want to make it right. Errors should be brought to the attention of the Editor-in-Chief by email: editor@easternecho.com

Weekly Calendar

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19	WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20	THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21	FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22	SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23	SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24
NARCAN OVERDOSE PREVENTION - LAYMAN TRAINING HALLE LIBRARY 300 1 P.M. - 2 P.M.	STUDENT EMPLOYMENT BROWN BAG LUNCH SERIES MCKENNY HALL 200 12:00 P.M. - 1 P.M.	POP-OFF CLOTHING SWAP STUDENT CENTER 350 4 P.M. - 6 P.M..	EMU CELLO STUDIO RECITAL\ ALEXANDER MUSIC BUILDING - RECITAL HALL 6:30 -P.M. - 7:30 P.M.	MUSIC MARKETING 101 @ GROVE STUDIOS! 11 A.M. - 12 P.M.	VEGANSGIVING 110 W MICHIGAN AVE 11 A.M. - 2 P.M.
CRAFTING WITH COMPASSION STUDENT CENTER FIRST FLOOR 2 P.M. - 4 P.M.	TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE VIGIL LAKEHOUSE 4:30 P.M. - 5:45 P.M.	ADULTING 101: FINANCIAL LITERACY 4 P.M. - 5P.M. ZOOM			
FORWARD! TO THE MOON MARK JEFFERSON SCIENCE COMPLEX 402 7:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.	DATING VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT DISCUSSION STUDENT CENTER BALLROOM B 7 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.				

Scoop's Forecast

54°	44°	Tuesday, Nov. 19	
52°	40°	Wednesday, Nov. 20	
46°	33°	Thursday, Nov. 21	
40°	29°	Friday, Nov. 22	
40°	27°	Saturday, Nov. 23	
41°	31°	Sunday, Nov. 24	
38°	28°	Monday, Nov. 25	

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

How Yarrow is disrupting the Ypsilanti rental scene

Joseph Bell
News Reporter

Courtesy of Dylan Cinti

Dylan and Jake Cinti, co-founders of the real estate firm Yarrow, are changing traditional expectations of what renting is all about in Ypsilanti.

Yarrow's focus on quality and affordability has positioned the company in a unique space in the market.

"We want to be a part of rewriting the narrative of Ypsi to make it so anyone who is a young person or anyone who is thinking of where they want to live considers Ypsi."

"We co-founded Yarrow in 2021 with the purchase of our first building across from the Ypsi district library," Cinti said. "We call it 'The Castle'. We were behind the scenes real estate investors from 2021 to 2023. In 2023, we took a look at what we were doing and realized that there was something specific, valuable, and worth capturing in an external facing way. We decided to create and launch a brand."

Cinti remarked about the fundamentals of his approach to real-estate investment in Ypsilanti.

"There are two major ways we are going to contribute to a better Ypsi: our product quality and the attainability of our product," Cinti said. "I'm a firm believer that for a town to succeed, small businesses have to succeed, We look at opportunities to bring government and small business together to create a better small business space."

Cinti outlined the Yarrow properties in Ypsilanti,

"Four properties, we recently got the downtown building, we call it the Unicorn building because Jen owned that store, she was a great steward of that building," Cinti said. "The building we just purchased at 114 is a historic building on Michigan avenue, a small but really charming building that is home to a company called Yours Truly that plans events."

Yarrow has also worked on marketing for local businesses, such as Witten Contracting, Professional Youth Theater of Michigan, John E. Lawrence Summer Jazz Festival, and more.

"Around Ypsi, a series that we release on Facebook primarily, all of it is filmed interviews of Ypsi small businesses... At this point we have done seven of these... I wanted to bring a professional, sophisticated craftsmanship for these videos to honor the quality of the businesses."

Yarrow is seeking to promote small businesses in Ypsilanti and provide housing for those who have been priced out of other markets, including teachers, restaurant workers, and middle-income families. Cinti stated Yarrow's aim is primarily on stewardship.

"[Stewardship is] based on the understanding that you need to respect and maintain buildings for the next generation and many generations to come," Cinti said.

The path forward has not been without difficulties though. Yarrow has faced challenges in the form of apprehension from potential investors and community stakeholders.

"People have been rightly apprehensive, there's a long history of contentious relations between those who own property and those who don't," Cinti claimed. "I am empathetic to people who have been skeptical of what we're doing. My goal, our goal, in addition to giving back to the community, is running a successful business."

Yarrow has differentiated itself from other real estate firms by focusing on the quality of life of their tenants in tangible ways.

"We really are trying to go about this in the right way." Cinti said. "We are trying to make very livable spaces where you don't have to worry about what your home life is like."

Yarrow has a three-pronged approach to renovating properties they acquire, as Cinti defined it.

"Respect and honor original, historical details, maximize livability through amenities... and make use of outdoor space through landscaping and construction."

Yarrow's aim of curating a satisfying experience for their tenants stands paramount. Cinti has placed a large emphasis on the relationship between the company and renters.

"I hate the term landlord," Cinti said. "I see myself as a service provider. The service I provide is high-attainable housing. I see it much more that way than a lord-serf relationship."

Cinti is invested in the relationship Yarrow has with tenants and is looking to provide an "obtainable elegance" in the city of Ypsilanti for people who do valuable work in our society. Cinti remarked about the relationship he wants to cultivate with tenants in Ypsilanti.

"I saw an opportunity to elevate parts of the community that are already there," Cinti expressed. "My goal was never to save Ypsi or turn Ypsi around. We are pretty small. What we say is that we are purposefully small ... If you want to grow in real estate, you have to keep collecting ... The happiness of our tenant is the number one thing we do to measure success".

Yarrow is primarily concerned with reinvestment in their tenants and community. The term "highly attainable" was continually emphasized by Cinti.

"We want Yarrow to be the last place you ever rent because you love the unit so much that you stop looking," Cinti declared.

Yarrow has worked in tangible ways to support their tenants and the community. Cinti remarked about a tenant's experience with Yarrow.

"We had one really long-time tenant, who are lead project manager, who is also a real-estate agent, helped represent him and buy his first house. It happened three more times. Every time it happened; I found that I was so genuinely happy to see people move forward."

Cinti, a graduate of Community High School and the University of Michigan, is a native of Ann Arbor. He provided personal insight into how the housing market has changed in Ann Arbor over the past few decades.

"I am largely disappointed in the direction that Ann Arbor has gone as far as home availability," Cinti critiqued. "It's a great city to get an education and it's a fantastic place to raise kids. It has become a place of enormous privilege that denies opportunity to people that do not make a certain income. For instance, social workers, who make way less than MDs or government workers who make a lot less than a lawyer. What precipitated that?"

Cinti shared his thoughts about Yarrow's pricing and how it reflects his philosophy.

"Ypsi is a place that is liveable for people doing the most important work in society. We model our pricing on the median income of Ypsilanti."

Cinti spoke to the experience of renting from Yarrow and his attitude toward what proper stewardship looks like.

"If someone leaves because they don't like your unit, I consider that sort of a failure. What could I have done to retain them longer? If they are leaving to buy a home then that fulfills what I want to see, people who do great jobs that get to own their own home. I want to be a part of making sure social workers, teachers, and people making modest salaries get to own homes."

Through Yarrow's stewardship and the thoughtfulness in supporting local businesses, the company has made real efforts to support the growth of downtown. Cinti explained that the success of the community depends on the success of small businesses.

"[The Downtown Development Authority] focuses on creating a more prosperous downtown and supporting local businesses. I would say there are definitely businesses in Ypsi that are gone too soon, and you want to see them around longer. We looked for ways for how businesses can help each other to succeed and talked about some strategies and tactics in which businesses can last longer in Ypsi."

There are different sides in the Ypsilanti DDA concerning the approach the community should take with crime. One side favors a more punitive approach and the other favors more relaxed measures. Cinti has stated that he wishes to bridge that divide and find compromise.

"What I am trying to do is find a common ground ... The quality of life for an unhoused person is significantly better in Ann Arbor. Ypsi needs to take steps to better address the needs of the unhoused's problems, better mental health services, and better rehabilitation services," Cinti argued. "On the other hand, I do think policing and safety are important, as well. I see our success as being intertwined with the success of Ypsi business owners and peoplee, which means we have a responsibility to give back to the community."

Yarrow has positioned itself as a leader in the cultivation of the community by subverting expectations of traditional real-estate ventures and providing affordable housing.

"I don't feel excited when we come into possession of a building," Cinti said. "I feel a responsibility. To make sure the roof is in shape, that the HVAC is properly installed. It is much more gratifying if you do it right."

Cinti alongside his brother Jake have been looking to invest in Ypsilanti for many generations to come. They have brought a fresh perspective on what renting in Ypsilanti looks like.

"Jake works full time in New York City. I am more of the boots on the ground person and Jake provides a lot of the strategic guidance. He is a commercial real estate professional and brings a lot of skills to the table... My brother really enjoys the process of negotiating." Cinti commented. "It's great to work with my brother and he brings a totally different perspective. I don't do anything big without consulting him... Working with a brother who is your best friend and also your business partner."

Yarrow has also stated plans for the short and long-term.

"Short term we are doing a number of renovation projects that make sure our portfolio looks great across the board,Ä¶ We have a substantial amount of money we put toward capital improvements and remodel projects. We are doing it strategically and thinking long term,Ä¶ While we are not going to be expanding anytime soon, our next step would involve further expansion into the commercial area to play a more helpful and valuable role in longevity."

Cinti's decision to invest in the city was partially informed by his own experience.

"Ypsilanti is the most architecturally beautiful city in Michigan," Cinti said. "The aesthetic of Ypsi lines up with my personal preferences there. Anecdotally, in my life, the coolest, most thoughtful people I know lived in Ypsi. So many thoughtful, civic-minded people made me really want to contribute to that community."

Yarrow has emerged as a company with a specific identity.

"We are an Ypsi-based, Ypsi-focused company that believes strongly in the community in tangible, meaningful ways, and we are going to continue to do that," Cinti said.

Voters pass ballot measures

Colae Eason
News Reporter

Ypsilanti voters weighed in on Washtenaw County ballot measures, contributing to passing initiatives that will fund emergency communications, veterans' relief, elderly services, mental health services, public safety, and special education.

The enhanced emergency communication ballot measure passed with 64% of votes approving the measure.

The millage provides about 2000 mobile and portable radios to all police, fire, and EMS units in Washtenaw County, according to the Washtenaw Emergency Communications Consortium.

The Veterans' Relief millage has passed with 71% voter approval and will fund the Washtenaw County Department of Veterans Affairs in providing financial aid and services to veterans.

A portion of the funds will be used for department operations and the other will be used for veterans relief programs throughout the county, according to the Board of Commissioners.

The new elderly services millage has been passed with 57% voter approval and will fund services and programs for people aged 60 and older in Washtenaw County.

A proposed plan to allocate these funds would be to establish a dedicated team to manage funding for older adult services, with the Commission on Aging advising the Board of Commissioners, according to the Board of Commissioners.

The community mental health and public safety millage was passed with 69% of votes approving the ballot measure. This will fund the county sheriff's department, the local police department, and the county's community mental health department.

The millage will generate resources for mental health and substance use treatment programs that improve health and quality of life across the county, according to Washtenaw County Community Mental Health.

The bill will also contribute to public safety programs, infrastructure, and equipment, according to the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department.

The special education millage renewal received about 73% of approval among voters. This millage will fund special education services for students with disabilities in the Washtenaw Intermediate School District.

"This millage renewal will positively impact every classroom in every school district across Washtenaw County, and we are grateful to our community for their continued support and commitment to ensuring every student has what they need to thrive," said Washtenaw ISD Superintendent Naomi Norman in a statement thanking voters.

What's the move? Nov. 20-27

Hunter Johnstone
News Reporter

Check out these events happening on and around Eastern Michigan University's campus.

Narcan Overdose Prevention - Layman Training- Nov. 19

Learn how to prevent overdoses with the use of Narcan in a training free to students and staff in Halle Library 300 from 1 to 2 p.m. To register email amickevi@emich.edu. Include your name, training date, department, and EID.

Crafting with Compassion - Nov 19

Craft and connect with others as a part of the Handmade for the Holidays event. The event will be free and take place in the Student Center First Floor from 2 to 4 p.m.

Forward! to the Moon - Nov. 19

Join Mythbusters' Kari Byron in a discussion about a sustainable future in space. The event cost $5 and will be held in Mark Jefferson Science Complex 402 from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Buy tickets here.

Student Employment Brown Bag Lunch Series - Nov. 20

Bring your lunch and your student hiring, eligibility, work-study or other questions to an informal luncheon at McKenny Hall 200 from 12 to 1 p.m.

Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil - Nov. 20

Remember and recognize lives lost to anti-trans violence at the Lake House from 4:30 to 5:45 p.m.

Dating Violence & Sexual Assault Discussion - Nov. 20

Listen to a discussion on awareness and education on what dating violence and sexual assault are, followed by local resources and a Q&A. The discussion is LBC credit-approved and will be held in Student Center Ballroom B from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Pop-Off Clothing Swap - Nov. 21

Give gender-affirming clothes as a part of the LGBT Resource Center's Trans Compassion Week in Student Center 350 from 4 to 6 p.m.

Adulting 101: Financial Literacy - Nov. 21

Join an hour-long lecture on budgeting, saving, common money mistakes to avoid, credit, and more on Zoom. The event is LBC credit-approved and runs from 4 to 5 p.m. Sign up here.

EMU CELLO Studio Recital - Nov. 22

Watch the artists of the EMU CELLO studio present their Fall 2024 recital at the Alexander Music Building Recital Hall from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Music Marketing 101 @ Grove Studios! - Nov. 23

Learn the ins and outs of promoting your music, connecting with fans, and growing your audience while connecting with other musicians. Tickets are $15 online and $20 at the door. The course runs from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

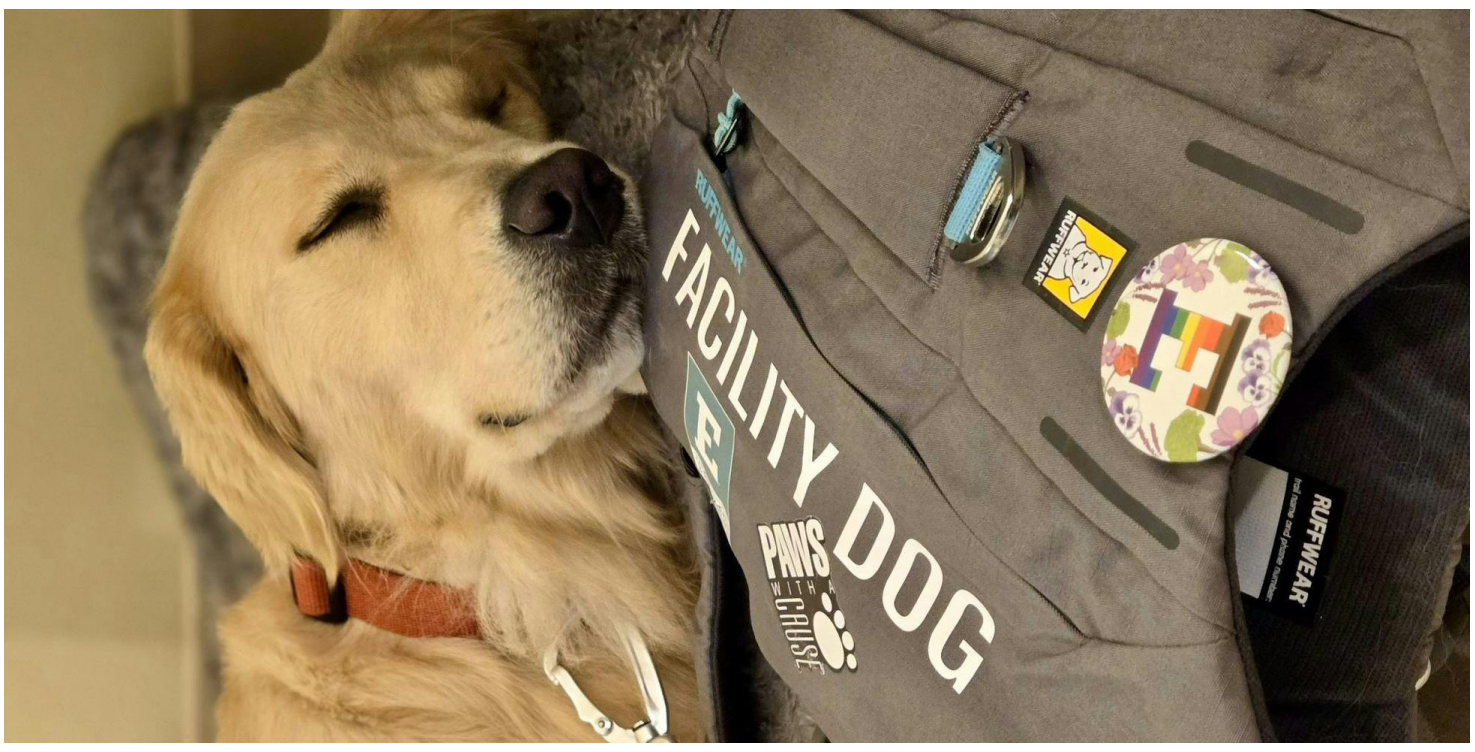
Vegansgiving - Nov. 24

Find vegan dishes and treats to eat for the holiday. This is a free event that will be at 110 W Michigan Ave from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Jennifer Kellman Fritz, Tinker support student mental health

Olivia Hendry
Staff Writer

Editor's Note: The Eastern Echo staff is meeting regularly with interesting people on and off campus. Engage in those conversations with us, through our weekly Q&A report. This week, Jennifer Kellman Fritz, dean of the university's College of Health and Human Services, and the handler for Tinker, the university's facility dog.



Tinker takes a cat nap after meeting some college students at Eastern Michigan University, accompanied by her handler, Jennifer Kellman Fritz, dean of the College of Health and Human Services. *Courtesy of Jenmifer Kelman Fritz*

Eastern Michigan University welcomed a first-of-its kind staff member to campus in 2024: Tinker, a 2-year-old golden retriever trained to support mental well-being and provide comfort to all.

Spearheaded by Dean Jennifer Kellman Fritz, who sought new ways to address student and faculty mental health, Tinker's arrival marks what Fritz hopes to be a continuing program. Unlike traditional therapy dogs, which typically engage in one-on-one sessions, Fritz said Tinker offers a calming presence to the broader campus, available to any student or staff member in need of a moment of comfort

Fritz collaborated with Paws with a Cause, a Michigan-based organization, to bring Tinker to EMU. In this Q&A, Fritz discusses the impact Tinker has had on campus, how EMU got its first facility dog, and how she, too, has benefitted from Tinker's training.

Q: How did the idea of Eastern having like a therapy dog come up?

Fritz: So, she's a facility dog, not a therapy dog. There is a difference. Just because therapy dogs are usually one-on-one with people, and facility dogs are more for everybody. I had the idea because, as a dean, I was trying to think of different ways that we could support students, faculty, everybody's mental health. I did some research and found a place in Michigan where we could get her, and I did a lot of research about the benefits of having [a facility dog]. Once I got the different permissions that I needed from the university, I went ahead and started the process.

Q: What are some of the benefits you researched?

Fritz: I looked into seeing if one dog could really make a difference. The benefits were just that she could deal with a lot of anxiety, stress, that kind of thing. Students come right before a test, when they're feeling anxious, or when they're having a bad day. What I found, which I hadn't really thought about it all, was that people who are missing their pets, who are living away from home, come to see her, and it really does make a difference. I hadn't thought about that, but I was really more just thinking about her calming presence. It's truly amazing how people light up when they see her.

Q: Could you explain the process of finding her?

Fritz: I reached out to a few different places across Michigan, but Paws with a Cause was more familiar to me because I had actually adopted a couple dogs from them. I talked to them about really committing to this. They went through the whole process in terms of getting interviewed, they had to come to my house -- because she lives with me -- they wanted to see my other dogs. They came to Eastern to find out where she would be, and all that kind of stuff. They wanted to make sure that we were in this for the long haul, and that it wasn't just, "Oh, it's cool to have a facility dog," and that we were going to change our mind.

So, once they saw that we were in it, they approved it. We also had to do the different steps through the university. And Eastern, I will say, has been truly so supportive [and] wonderful, which was amazing. They are really, truly committed to student mental health. They saw this as a really big step, and I could see us having more dogs in the future.

Q: I believe the Title IX office is training a therapy dog. Are you working with that at all?

Fritz: No, we're not. I know there's been a lot of requests in terms of other people curious about [having a facility dog], and I would love to work with anybody who is interested, because I see the benefits. It's a lot of work, the commitment of it, but it's totally worth every minute of it, because she's amazing.

Q: How many people come during her office hours?

Fritz: It ranges between like, 10 to 30 in the hour and a half that she has. But sometimes people will just come and pet her, and sometimes people will sit with her for 15 minutes. I think it just depends. And sometimes we have return people, who will come and just be with her. And then different groups on campus have reached out asking us to bring her to different things. Like she went to a TRIO meeting. We're taking her to an academic advising meeting. She's going to several different meetings in the next few weeks.

We have to balance that out too, because she gets exhausted, because, literally, she's always on when people are with her. At the end of the day, when I take her home, on a busy day, she is exhausted. And the difference is, when she gets home and she knows she's not working anymore, she plays pretty hard with my other dogs, and she loves that too. So, it's nice to give her that balance.

Q: On EMU's Instagram page, there's a post about her, and it said that "Tinker was specifically trained to provide emotional support, bring comfort and reduce stress." How have you seen her do that?

Fritz: It's almost like she knows. I don't know how, but it's like she knows when somebody needs comfort. It's like she can feel it, but she's so mellow that I think she senses a lot of times when people are stressed. She can read body language really well. She has this tendency to know when somebody needs her.

Q: Have you kind of benefited from Tinker's faculty dog training?

Fritz: Oh my gosh, she's, like, the most amazing. And I've had many dogs in my life, but I do think I've benefited. She's such a gift. I think I get to benefit because I see what she does for others: It's so amazing to see her give comfort to the students. And I love it, I think, selfishly, because being a dean, I don't get to teach and I don't get to spend as much time with students, but I leave my door open whenever I can. And students come by all the time.

There's a lot of nursing students who take classes down this hall, and they come in, before and after class all the time, and the same students come and they're like, "Where's Tinker?," when she's not here. It makes me so happy, because I know we're giving a gift to these students who look forward to seeing her, and I know it calms them. It has benefited me a ton, as an administrator, to see the students so happy, but also just having her in my life. I mean, she's an amazing dog, and she brings me comfort, as much as anybody else.

Q: Do you have any final thoughts about Tinker, and the facility dog program?

Fritz: I'm grateful that we have her and that the students do, and I hope that we can. I mean, I'm a social worker, so I'm very big on mental health for everybody and improving mental health. And so, I think that this is one way that we could do better on campus. I hope that we can get some other dogs down the line.

Tinker is available to visit locations and events all across campus as needed, and during her working hours. Those hours, by the way, include some regular office time: Mondays and Thursdays in Fritz's office, 206B Marshall; and Tuesday and Wednesdays at Halle Library, in room 200.

EMU alum works with musicians and journalists through new Youtube series

Isabella DiPonio
Staff Writer

Editor's Note: The Eastern Echo staff is meeting regularly with interesting people both on and off campus. Engage in those conversations with us through our weekly Q&A report. This week, we interview Eastern Michigan University alum Antonio Cooper.

Participants in The Seven Series project include, from left, London Beck, Maia Evans, Kenyatta Rashon, Candis Alisha, project founder Antonio Cooper, Derek Dandridge, and at the bottom, TJ Boykins. *(Courtesy of Antonio Cooper)*

Eastern Michigan University alum Antonio Cooper, a former writer for The Eastern Echo, has launched a program called "The Seven Series" that highlights local artists and journalists. While at EMU, Cooper earned a degree in journalism. After graduating, he began looking for ways to provide exposure and experience for local journalists and artists that he did not have.

Q: What is "The Seven Series?"

Cooper: It's a music and performance series. You have artists from around the area come and perform. They do whatever song they want to, and what highlights the artist is that they have a color of their choice where they perform under lights. Whereas, for example, I feel like my music is cutesy, so I'll perform under a pink light. If I feel like my music is intense, I'll perform under a red light. Then afterwards, they have a sit-down, one-on-one interview with up-and-coming journalists or a student journalist. The journalist sits down in front of a camera and asks questions to prove they can interview on camera, to show they have the skills to ask questions and be free to show their personality.

Q: What was the driving force in creating the series?

Cooper: The reason I started this is to give up-and-coming journalists the opportunity to boost their resume and to show that, you know, I have the skills, and I can show this on my resume. So that's the true reason why I started this... to show the skills that artists have in Washtenaw County, and to show that there's a lot of journalism skills. And to give these up-and-coming journalists an opportunity to graduate, go into the field and showcase that they have enough on their resume to where they can thrive in the market.

Q: How long does a season take to shoot?

Cooper: So, we do bi-weekly episodes, and shooting the episodes doesn't take that long for a season. That's more so depending on everyone's schedule. And it's all on YouTube.

Q: How can people find "The Seven Series?"

Cooper: It's all on YouTube. If you look up The Seven Series Amplify on YouTube, all of the performances and interviews that we have released so far will pop up.

Q: How are artists found?

Cooper: For season one, particularly, it was me for the most part. I was doing research and going, oh, I like this artist, I want them to perform. But that's changing for season two because we have files and folders now to where people have suggested to us. Ypsi, Ann Arbor, Saline [and] Dexter are very musical outings. So anytime you go to a bar, you hear a band. Anytime you go somewhere, you are going to hear some people singing, or some rappers and go, oh, they're pretty cool. So, it's a bit of me doing research, a bit of people recommending it nowadays, but for the most part, it was just me doing all the research myself.

Q: How long has the series been going on?

Cooper: We finished shooting season one this year and we're prepping for season two right now. This has been going on for two years now. The Amplify Project picked it up and they said they wanted to take it on. And I am very grateful for them because they're the ones who have put this on and put it out to the world.

Q: Who was involved in creating the series?

Cooper: First person I reached out to was my good brother, Derek Dandridge. I reached out to him, and he was a great photographer around Detroit, and he agreed to do it. I told him this is the vision that I have and he said yes. I told him, I can't do this without you. And he agreed to do it. He was the primary videographer, photographer. He edited all the videos and I want to give a big shoutout to him. He recently passed away. I just want to say that I'm very thankful to have been his brother and I'm very thankful that he believed in my vision. Because without him this vision does not exist. Also, all of the people who helped with season one, a special thanks to them. That was Maya Evans and London Banks. London came in and it was an absolute superstar, and I appreciate them, and I appreciate my entire team for making all of this possible.

GameAbove, Detroit Lions partner for bowl game

Elena Davis
Sports Editor

GameAbove Entertainment, led by President Khalid Walton, has announced its title sponsorship of the upcoming GameAbove Sports Bowl in collaboration with the Detroit Lions. This event is set to become a celebrated annual tradition in downtown Detroit, promising an enhanced experience for fans, athletes, and the local community.

The partnership reflects GameAbove's mission to promote sports and support the next generation of athletes while expanding its presence in Detroit.

Khalid Walton shared the motivation behind this initiative: "This partnership reflects GameAbove's mission and dedication to sports, while showcasing and creating opportunities for the next generation of athletes."

The sponsorship is yet another addition to GameAbove's impressive portfolio of contributions to academic, wellness, and sports initiatives throughout Michigan.

An Elevated Experience for Athletes and Fans

The GameAbove Sports Bowl aims to set a new standard for college bowl games, particularly for athletes and fans attending games in the Midwest.

"We hope that the student-athletes and athletic programs participating in this year's GameAbove Sports Bowl will leave with the impression that 'they did it right,'" Walton said.

Acknowledging the competition with warm-weather bowl locations, Walton emphasized GameAbove's commitment to making Detroit's event unique and memorable. "We are excited to enhance the fan experience and contribute to a game that has become a cherished tradition in Detroit."

Community Engagement Through Football and Festivities

While the GameAbove Sports Bowl excites Ford Field, it also promises numerous benefits for the broader Detroit and Eastern Michigan communities. Although the bowl game is not exclusively focused on EMU, GameAbove's involvement in local events bridges potential students, alums, and supporters to connect with Eastern Michigan University.

"Significant initiatives, like the GameAbove Sports Bowl, help connect people to EMU in an indirect manner," Walton noted.

GameAbove's continued support for EMU is woven into its commitment to Detroit and the EMU community, showcasing the brand's deep-rooted connections with the university.

Walton confirmed that the Detroit Lions and GameAbove plan to include initiatives specifically tailored to engage local fans and young people in Detroit. He hinted at forthcoming updates, adding, "In collaboration with the Detroit Lions, we are excited to welcome local fans and youth to Ford Field."

A Lasting Partnership

This partnership reflects GameAbove's long-term vision.

"We aim to be here for many years," Walton stated, focusing on ensuring the 2024 GameAbove Sports Bowl sets the stage for future events.

A Legacy of Doing Good

Keith Stone founded the GameAbove brand in 2019 with a mission to 'doing more good.' What started as a philanthropic brand quickly expanded, focusing initially on Stone's alma mater, Eastern Michigan University. GameAbove has since invested in academic and athletic programs at EMU and supported causes like Gamers Outreach and the Mr. October Foundation, helping improve STEM education and the workforce pipeline for underserved youth. Walton shared Stone's guiding principle: "Our approach is simple: go for greatness and think big."

GameAbove's impact, both at EMU and in Detroit, stands as a testament to its commitment to community development. It provides an enduring legacy that bridges college athletics, education, and philanthropy. As Walton and the GameAbove team prepare for the 2024 GameAbove Sports Bowl, Detroit football fans can anticipate an exciting and unforgettable event highlighting the best of collegiate sports and community engagement.

Markus Allen inspires strong finish for EMU football amid tough season

Courtesy of EMU Athletics

Elena Davis
Sports Editor

Markus Allen, one of Eastern Michigan University's leading receivers, approaches each game with a steadfast focus, knowing his team's season hangs in a delicate balance.

After a tough loss and facing challenging circumstances, Allen recently shared his thoughts on the team's spirit, performance, and the critical plays that continue to define their season.

Allen expressed the team's awareness of their position by reflecting on the season so far. "Right now, we know our backs are against the wall," Allen said. "We have to come in every day, put our heads down, and work to finish strong. There's still hope, depending on how things play out in the conference." With a strong sense of unity, he stressed the importance of daily effort and maintaining a close bond with his teammates and coaches.

When asked about the recent "Hail Mary" play and the decision to go for a two-point conversion, Allen praised the preparation and trust within the team. "We worked on that play in practice; our coaches stress the details, so I feel like the guys went out there and they knew what they had to do, they knew their objective," he explained. "So we worked that throughout the week and went for it... But everybody on the sideline believed in the coaches. We believed in the play calling. They believed in us. So we had to go execute." Though the play didn't result in a score, Allen emphasized the team's unity, showing confidence in their collective efforts.

For Allen, the team's mindset remains unwavering. Even when faced with setbacks, like his teammate Terry Lockett Jr. missing a critical catch, Allen said the team rallied around each other. "[Terry] felt some guilt, but a lot of the players on the team surrounded him with love after... it was on us... It should not have even gotten to that point... We all knew what the game plan was, offensively and defensively... Terry gave it his all," Allen reflected.

Allen also shared insight into his dynamic relationship with quarterback Cole Snyder. Known for distributing the ball across multiple receivers, Snyder keeps Allen and his teammates on their toes. "Cole does a great job of spreading the ball around... So when the ball comes to me very, very little, or comes to me a lot, I just got to be ready every time," Allen said. "You know what I mean, so you got to make the most of your opportunities. But I really don't look at him no different. I never will."

Allen's humility and team-first attitude remain central to his approach. "There's things I do want to clean up. I do want to get better personally. But as far as the performance aspect, I do see growth [in myself]," he said. "Whether the stats say this or that, you know what I mean, I still see individual growth through practices, through prep, through everything you talk about, position change."

Reflecting on his early days with EMU, Allen mentioned that the receiving group's commitment was evident from the start. "When I first got in here, like these dudes are already on it like they already had a plan... to do extra work and do extra things. So I feel like the things that are coming towards us are earned... so I'm really just proud of the group, you know, staying together, whether adversity hits or not," he said, noting that they remain focused on finishing strong with just two games left.

As the season progresses, Allen emphasizes the importance of "closing the gap" and staying hungry. "Coach Creighton says every week, you know, we come in, we write out these goals every day, like for our practice days, what's your goal and everything, I feel like it's [to] close to the gap," he explained. "Like it's just to be hungry, hungry to be coached,Ä¶adversity is going to come, but I feel like day to day, we still have to continue to work on being great, and how can we continue to get better."

Allen's contributions, including a recent touchdown that ignited EMU's offense, have showcased his growth as a leader and playmaker. "With that touchdown, I knew I had to make a play; I got to be the guy [who] has to spark the flame right now for us... We practiced it all week, and all week in preparation helps you a lot."

For Allen and his fellow Eagles, the journey isn't just about wins and losses but also about resilience, unity, and growth. With a challenging end to the season ahead, Allen remains focused, eager to give his best, and hopeful to contribute to a lasting impact on EMU's program.

Eagle Tips and Tales: Nov. 19-25

Elana Davis
Sports Editor

Get ready for an action-packed week of Eastern Michigan athletics! With key matchups in football, basketball, swimming, and cross country, there's plenty to cheer for as the Eagles take on exciting competition at home and away. Here's a breakdown of the can't-miss events this week:

Football Showdown vs. Buffalo - Senior Night

On Nov. 20, EMU football returns to Rynearson Stadium for the last home game of the season as they take on Buffalo at 7 p.m. It's Senior Night, so join us in celebrating our graduating Eagles as they defend their home turf under the lights one last time this season!

Swimming & Diving vs. Oakland

EMU's swimming & diving team will dive into competition against Oakland on Nov. 21 at 4 p.m. in Ypsilanti. This meet promises a thrilling display of skill and determination as the Eagles race against a strong opponent.

Women's Basketball vs. Purdue Fort Wayne

Women's basketball takes the court on Nov. 21 at 6:30 p.m. in Ypsilanti for an early-season game against Purdue Fort Wayne. It's set to be an intense matchup as the Eagles look to start building momentum on their home court.

Men's Basketball at Oakland

Travel to Rochester with the men's basketball team on Nov. 21 as they face Oakland at 7 p.m. in a local rivalry game. With plenty of action expected, this is a must-see for EMU fans looking to support the Eagles on the road.

Cross Country at NCAA Championships

On Nov. 23, the men's and women's cross-country teams will travel to Madison, Wisconsin, to compete in the NCAA Championships. This prestigious event is the culmination of a season of hard work, and our Eagles are ready to showcase their endurance and speed on the national stage.

Men's Basketball at Houston Christian

Ending the week on Nov. 25, the men's basketball team will hit the road again to face Houston Christian at 8 p.m. in Texas. It's another great test for the Eagles as they look to build strength and unity on the road.

Don't miss a minute of EMU action this week-whether you're cheering from the stands or following along from home. Go Eagles!

Love sports? Love photos? Capture live games for The Eastern Echo! Contact advisor@easternecho.com for more information!

'The Penguin' is how Batman villain stories should be told

Frank Remski
Review Columnist

Review

While fans wait for the sequel to 2022's "The Batman," they got to revisit Gotham in the villain-centric series, "The Penguin." Taking place after the events of the film, it followed Oswald Cobb, AKA the Penguin, as he got involved in the Falcone family's criminal drama.

The series starred Colin Farrell as the Penguin, featuring prosthetics to make him look more like the character. His co-star was Cristin Milioti as Sofia Falcone, the daughter of a powerful crime family. The showrunner was Lauren LeFranc and Matt Reeves, director of "The Batman," served as a producer.

Highs

One of the unique parts of Batman as a superhero is that his mythos can be put into genres besides superheroes, offering them unique flexibility. A popular example of this would be 2019's "Joker" which was a psychological thriller and its recent sequel which was a musical. "The Penguin" further divorced these mythos from superheroes by creating an excellent gangster drama.

This take on the Penguin took him from a wacky villain and grounded him as a sadistic, complicated crime lord. However, it maintained a respect for the superhero genre through its styling and tone, allowing characters to be quirky and stylized.

When it comes to media starring villains as protagonists, in order to add complexity they often make said villain sympathetic. This could be seen with the films "Maleficent," "Joker," and the "Star Wars" prequel trilogy. No shade to those films as they had an audience and sympathetic villains can be well done, it just isn't the only way of handling villain protagonists. What made "The Penguin" refreshing was its understanding that a villain can be gripping and have depth, while still being, well, a villain.

The show also featured a well-written, sympathetic villain in Sofia Falcone. In many ways, the show was as much hers as it was the Penguin's. Her storyline showed how Gotham as a city could harden people into villainy. Episode four was a series highlight in this regard. She was a fascinating character that garnered both sympathy and disgust.

This excellent writing was enhanced with excellent performances from the entire cast, balancing the weirdness and darkness of their plots with pathos. The show also gave a much-needed expansion on this version of Gotham, playing into the fallout of "The Batman" with a high production value that nearly matched the film.

Lows

Eight episodes weren't enough to tell this story. Especially towards the end, the plot was a bit rushed, introducing key backstory a bit too late to have the full impact, rushing through points that would be worthy of an entire episode, or not digging deep enough into some side characters and subplots.

The show also missed out on stylizing Gotham itself more. In "The Batman," viewers were treated to an aesthetically rich Gotham City, one befitting of these dark, gothic theatrics. "The Penguin" had a high production value, but lacked the same stylistic sensibilities.

Verdict

"The Penguin" mastered telling a Batman story without Batman or superheroics. It knew how to balance quirkiness, emotion, and darkness in the twisty world of Gotham criminals. Between "The Batman" and "The Penguin," this adaptation of the Batman mythos is well on the way to being one of the best.

All episodes of "The Penguin" are available to stream on Max, previously HBO Max.

Rating: 9 out of 10

Frank Remski is a film and theater reviewer for the Eastern Echo. He is majoring in media studies and journalism and minoring in public relations. He has worked for The Echo since summer of 2023 and has written both news stories and opinion pieces.

'Time Cut' travels back to the 2000s

Mariam Fakhreddine
Review Columnist

Review

"Time Cut," directed by Hannah Macpherson, was recently released on Netflix. This film features Madison Bailey as Lucy Field and Antonia Gentry as Summer Field. It takes the audience on a time-traveling adventure.

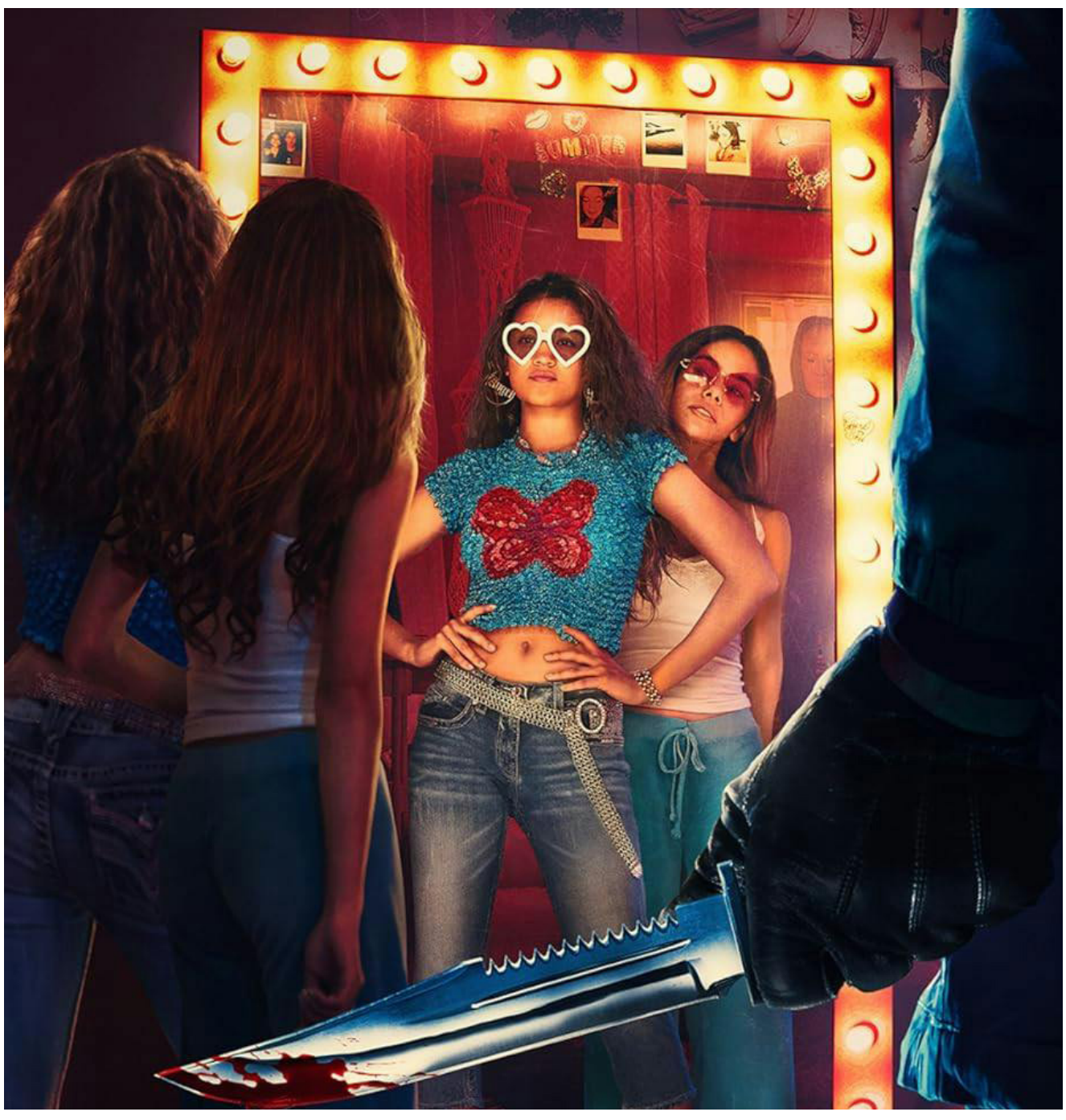
This movie follows Lucy, a teen in 2024 who accidentally travels back in time to 2003, days before this masked killer murders students. This serial killer murders her sister Summer; Lucy has never met her as she was born after her death.

Highs

The high point of this film is the clothing, which takes us back to 2003. They captured the authentic style of the 2000s, using Uggs and colorful clothing. This aspect shows how things were back then and how different they are from 2024.

Another highlight is the plot. It is a different concept, a mix of slasher horror and time travel. The pacing and suspense of the movie was good and kept the audience guessing.

The time travel machine was interesting, and the graphics of how Lucy teleported were impressive. The character experiences were intense, and the bond between Lucy and her sister grew as friends before Summer found out about the truth about their connection. Summer's personality was perky, sweet, and full of sparks. She highlighted Lucy's life and showed her how much she values her sister.



Another high was the bond between Lucy and Quinn (Griffin Gluck). Their friendship grew stronger as he helped her with time traveling and capturing the actual killer. He supported her, believed Lucy was necessary, and gave her purpose. Lucy found her place with her sister and Quinn; they showed her that she was not alone.

Lows

"Time Cut" has minimal lows, considering it was a short film. The main low was how confusing the plot could be. Understanding the purpose and why Lucy's parents did not give her the credit she deserved was challenging.

Another low point was the ending. It was surprising and did not add up. It was not as intense as it should've been, and the past and future events became confusing. The true killer was not as scary as they could have been.

If the film had been longer, there could have been more background information about why the actual killer had been targeted and that could've made the film better.

Verdict

"Time Cut" is worth watching, depending on whether you're looking for entertainment rather than looking for a horror film. This shorter film could have included more background knowledge about the characters.

Rating: 6 out of 10

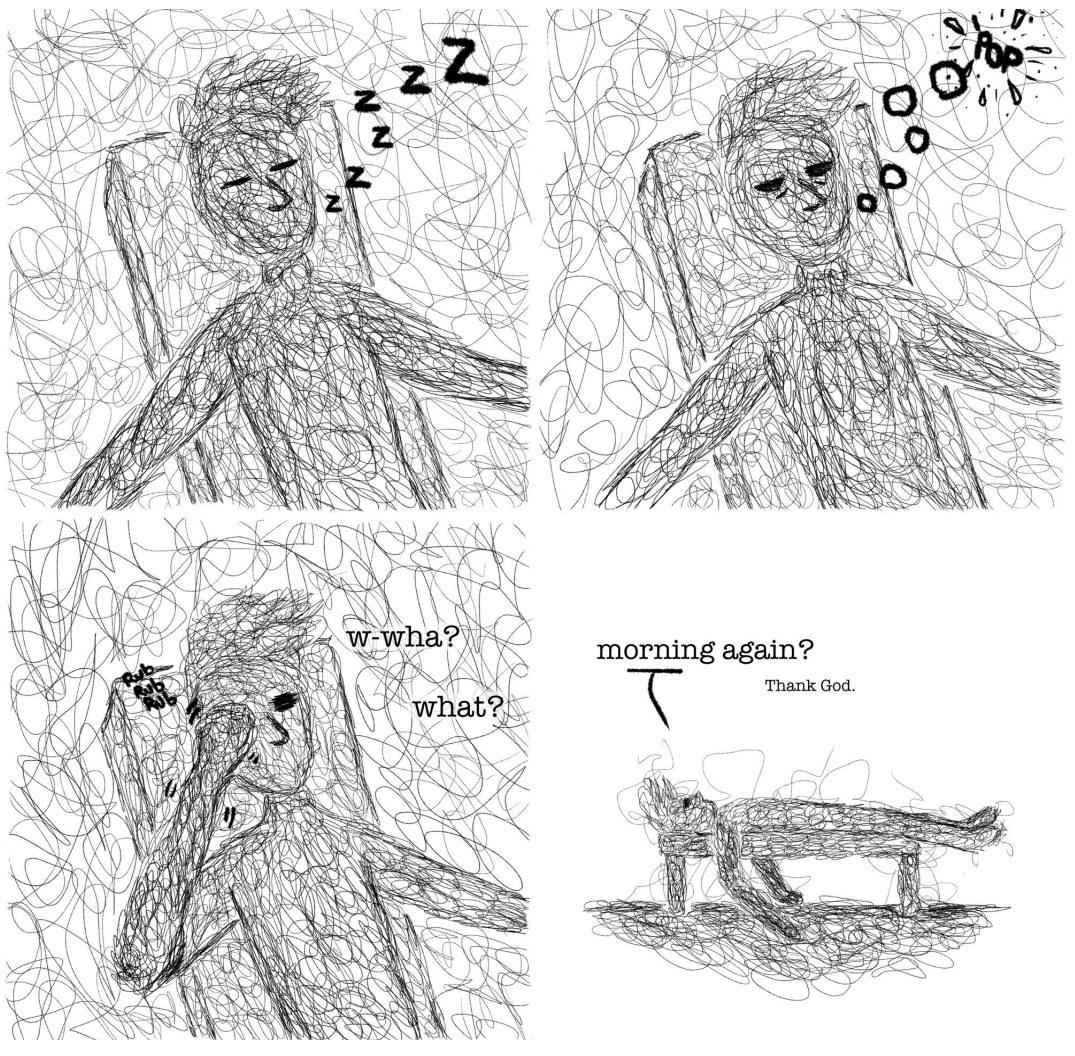
Mariam Fakhreddine is a film and theater reviewer for The Eastern Echo. She has worked as a news and features reporter for The Echo for two years.

Everything!
Kylee Murdoch
Comics Artist

WONDERCORD x Gideon the Ghost: Meeting
Rylee Curley
Chief Designer

Scoop says...

Morning Again
Gideon the Ghost
Comics Artist



Find more comics on our website!

Notes from the Editor: meet our friend Scoop!

Ameera Salman
Editor-in-Chief

The Eastern Echo has been lucky to be joined by a fabulous new friend and expert weather forecaster this semester.

You might have seen him make his debut this year and hanging around on the paper. If you were confused, allow me to explain.

Scoop is a new student at Eastern Michigan University and an aspiring environmental photojournalist here at The Eastern Echo.

He landed in our office wing early this semester and begged the team for a job.

We were blown away by his uncanny resemblance to an eagle we're all familiar with on this campus, and so decided he would make a great spokesperson for The Echo.

Ever since Scoop joined the team, he has filled the office with laughter.

Scoop is always getting involved at The Echo.

You might find him listening in to Eagletainment or helping out with the print edition at the copy desk.

On his days off, Scoop is on the hunt for his next favorite resting perch. I can personally attest to finding Scoop napping on my office couch. But can I blame him?

Scoop loves to explore the offices and play hide-and-seek with The Echo editors to see who he can scare.

You also might find Scoop re-energizing with some yoga or meditating in the kitcten.

No matter where he is, Scoop is a beloved member of The Echo staff and I for one I am so glad he flew into the newsroom window on that summer Sunday.

Scoop is a spokesperson, a mascot, a friend -- you might even find him modeling for Echo merch soon.

But Scoop is also here at The Echo for the same reasons as the rest of us -- to make journalism fun, news accessible, and newspapers cool again.

So every week when you see his face, camera, and press badge, I hope you remember that we're students here just like Scoop.

We care about this community and want to uplift the truth within it -- and so does Scoop.

Ameera Salman is the editor in chief of The Echo. She has served as a writer and editor with the news organization, including two years as editor of the Cellar Roots literary magazine, since 2022.

Photo by Echo staff

The Eastern Echo

WE'RE HIRING!

- Reporters
- Photographers
- Comic Artists
- Graphic Designers

AND EVEN. . .

Leadership positions!

Send your resume to managing@easternecho.com

WE WANT YOU